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REMARKS

Claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over U.S. Pat. No. 5,982,506 to Kara in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,360,254 to Linden. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 4 is now amended to include the same subject matter that was added to claim 1 by the Amendment of August 20, 2004, i.e., the subject matter of claim 2. That amendment overcame the rejection of claim 1 over Kara and Micali, and resulted in its allowance.

Claim 4 was identical to claim 1, except for part of their sixth paragraphs. The sixth paragraph of claim 1 read,

said e-mail content certifying device, upon judging that there is no tampering with said text of content certification, saves registration information that contains said text of content certification in a storage device, *sends a content-certified e-mail that contains said text of content certification to said e-mail terminal device at the receiver's side*, and sends a receipt e-mail that contains receipt information indicating that content certification has been effected to said e-mail terminal device at the sender's side;

while the same paragraph in claim 4 read,

said e-mail content certifying device, upon judging that there is no tampering with said text of content certification, saves registration information that contains said text of content certification in a storage device, *sends a content certification notice e-mail containing an access destination in a Web server and an access key for specifying a receiver to said e-mail terminal device at the receiver's side*, and sends a receipt e-mail containing receipt information indicating that content certification has been effected to said e-mail terminal device at the sender's side;

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where the italicized text is the only area of difference between claim 4 as now amended and allowed claim 1.

The Applicant suggests to the Examiner that claim 4, as it now includes the subject matter of claim 2, should like claim 1 be allowable—unless the differences in the italicized texts above somehow detract from the allowability to be imparted to claim 4 by the subject matter of claim 2.

The Applicant sees no such detraction. The italicized texts above recite two varied ways of indicating that content certification has been effected, with “content-certified e-mail” appearing in 1 and “content certification notice e-mail ” appearing in claim 4. This difference between the two claims has nothing to do with the subject matter of claim 2, which reads

said e-mail terminal device at the sender's side sends a review request e-mail to said e-mail content certifying device, said review request e-mail containing receipt information in said receipt e-mail;

said e-mail content certifying device, upon receipt of said review request e-mail, retrieves one set of registration information corresponding to an identifier in said review request e-mail from said storage device, and judges whether there is any tampering with the receipt information in said review request e-mail based on said one set of registration information retrieved; and

said e-mail content certifying device, upon judging that there is no tampering with the receipt information in said review request e-mail, sends an e-mail containing said text of content certification to said e-mail terminal device at the sender's side.

The phrase “content-certified e-mail ” from claim 1 does not appear in this text, and neither does the phrase “content certification notice e-mail ” from claim 4; thus, the minor difference between claims 1 and 4 is unrelated to the subject matter of claim 2. The Applicant therefore sees no reason that claim 4 should not also now be allowable.

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New claim 7 is patentable by its dependence from allowable claim 4.

Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of all claims are requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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I certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (fax no. 571-273-8300) on October 27, 2005.

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Signature



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